

Message Text

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16

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TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS:FAO, UNWFC

SUBJECT:BANGLADESH PARTICIPATION IN FIRST WORLD FOOD COUNCIL,
JUNE 23-27, ROME

1. LARGELY BECAUSE OF LDC BICKERING OVER THE COMPETENCE OF
THE SECRETARIAT AND A PROPOSED SET OF RULES OF PROCEDURE,
THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED WORLD FOOD COUNCIL MADE ONLY SCANT
PROGRESS IN ITS FIRST SESSION. THE COUNCIL, AS EMBASSY WILL
RECALL, WAS THE PRINCIPAL OUTGROWTH OF THE NOVEMBER 1974
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WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE. ALTHOUGH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

STAND MOST TO BENEFIT FROM THIS HIGH LEVEL COORDINATING-ADVISORY BODY, THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ALMOST COMPLETE LACK OF PROGRESS.

2. IN GENERAL THEY USED COMPLAINTS ABOUT DOCUMENTATION AND THE LACK OF ADEQUATE INTERPRETATION (TO HANDLE CAUCUS GROUPS) AS THE BASIS FOR CALLING FOR THE OUSTER OF WHAT THEY CHARGED WAS AN INCOMPETENT AND UNREPRESENTATIVE SECRETARIAT. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE MAIN FOCUS WAS THE REMOVAL OF DR. JOHN HANNAH (FORMER DIRECTOR OF AID) WHO WAS APPOINTED AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COUNCIL BY UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM.

3. ALTHOUGH THE DELEGATION OF BANGLADESH REFRAINED FROM

SPEAKING AGAINST THE SECRETARIAT OR DR. HANNAH IN PUBLIC DEBATE, WE KNOW THAT THEIR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO, MR. S. AHMED, WAS AN ACTIVE CRITIC WITHIN THE GROUP OF 77. HE ALSO PLAYED A PROMINENT PART IN THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON RULES OF PROCEDURE WHERE PERSISTENT DEVELOPING COUNTRY ATTEMPTS TO ENLARGE THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL'S PRESIDENT (AND UNDERCUT THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR) PREVENTED THE COUNCIL FROM REACHING AGREEMENT ON ANY OF THE PROPOSED RULES.

4. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO INFORM THE BDG OF OUR CONCERN OVER THE ACTIONS OF MR. AHMED AND OUR REGRET THAT THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL, WHICH HOLDS SO MUCH PROMISE FOR THE DEVELOPING NATIONS, WAS UNABLE TO MOVE AHEAD. WE THINK IT IS UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT MINISTERS TO DEVOTE TIME AND EFFORT TO IMPROVING THE CRITICAL WORLD FOOD SITUATION AND YET BE FACED WITH DISRUPTIVE, ILL-CONCEIVED ACTION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. THE GLOBAL FOOD PROGRAM DEPENDS UPON COOPERATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRESS. IF THE ACTIONS OF THE BANGLADESH DELEGATION ARE TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BDG'S VIEWPOINT, THE USG MUST CONCLUDE THAT THE BDG DOES NOT ACCORD TO THE GLOBAL FOOD PROGRAM THE SAME IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO IT BY THE USG. IF THIS CONCLUSION IS UNWARRANTED, USG BELIEVES IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR BDG REPRESENTATIVE AT FUTURE MEETINGS TO BE INSTRUCTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACCORDINGLY IN THE INTEREST OF SOLVING THIS IMPORTANT GLOBAL PROBLEM THROUGH COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE REPORT ON APPROACH AND REACTION OF BDG. SIMILAR PROTESTS ARE BEING SENT TO GUINEA AND SENEGAL. KISSINGER

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